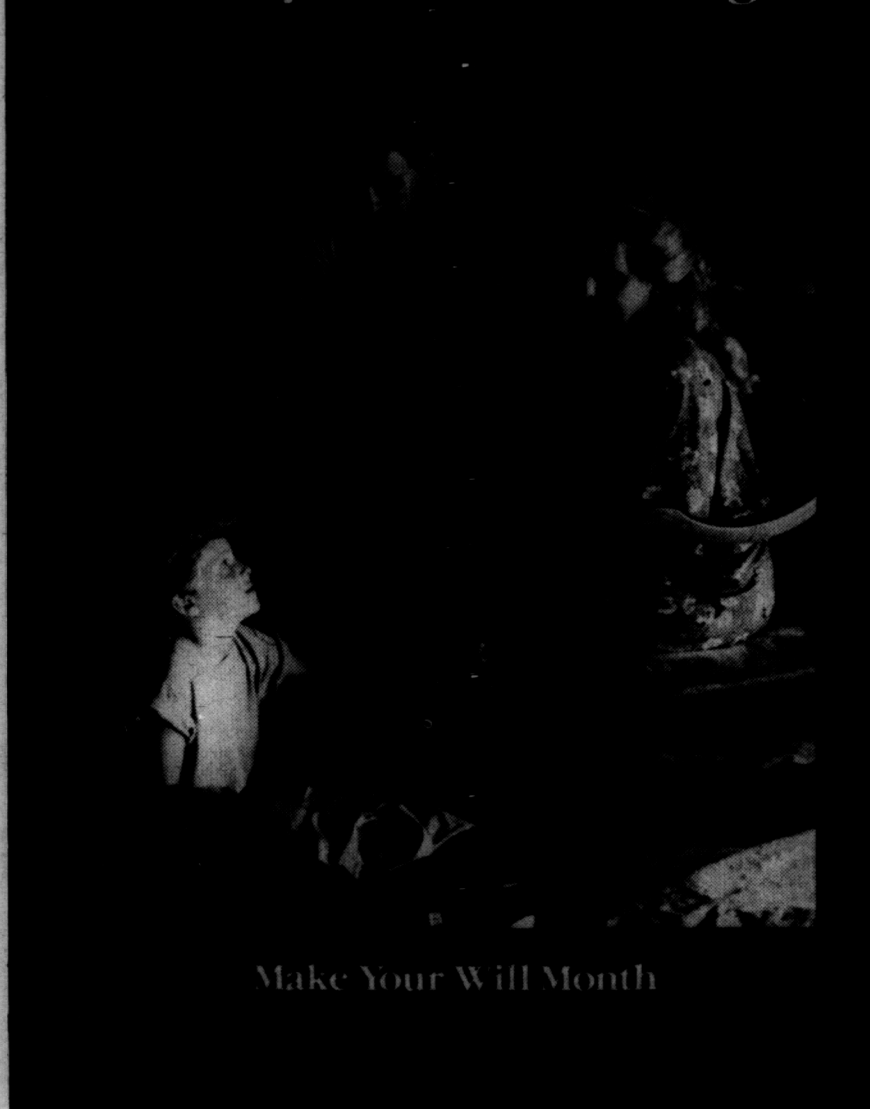


The Boy Who Never Forgot



Make Your Will Month

Through a will, an individual may provide for special family needs. Distribution of the estate can be made based on the needs of each family member rather than on the basis of "share and share alike." A trust included in a will can provide guidance for handling the financial affairs of minor children, elderly parents, or even a spouse. A will says to the family, "I love you . . . I care!"

A will also permits all or part of an estate to be distributed to the Lord's work either outright or in the form of a permanent trust, called endowment. An endowment trust provides that the principal is retained and the earnings are used for the Christian causes named in the will.

The endowment method was chosen by George Dame who lived in Little Rock, Arkansas, as a child.

As with many families of his generation, George Dame's family sometimes faced difficult times. On several occasions, gifts of food or clothing from Little Rock's Second Baptist Church had helped bring a ray of sunshine to him and his family.

As he became an adult, even though he moved to a distant state, these expressions of love were not forgotten by Mr. Dame. After his death in 1981, the church was notified that Mr. Dame's will had established a trust that would provide income for the church to use in ministering to needy families during the Christmas season.

Each year church leaders follow the guidelines of the trust closely. In 1987 some fifty sponsoring families, with an allotment of approximately \$75 per child, took 180 children on a Saturday morning shopping spree. Year by year, the trust income has grown, enabling the church to reach more and more families. Through 1987, more than 950 children have had a happier Christmas because of Mr. Dame's will.

For information about wills and estate planning, write to the Mississippi Baptist Foundation, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 (phone 601-968-3800).

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, January 12, 1989

Published Since 1877

Disaster relief results in a wedding, many baptisms

WESLACO, Texas (BP) — Disaster relief by Southern Baptists in the wake of Hurricane Gilbert in northeastern Mexico this fall has resulted in a continuing saga of people coming to Christ and reaching out to others.

Soon after the storm wreaked death and destruction in the San Fernando and Monterrey areas, disaster relief volunteers Jerry Bob Taylor, manager of Circle 6 Baptist Encampment near Stanton, Texas, and Isaac Torres, Texas Baptist partnership missions consultant to Mexico, witnessed to David Romero, aide to the governor of the state of Tamaulipas.

After Romero prayed to receive Christ as Lord, he exclaimed: "Why have I never heard this before? Why has my family never heard this before? Why has my governor and his wife never heard this before? I'm going home and tell my wife."

When Romero's wife, Irma, heard the gospel, she also received Christ into her life. Then Romero's mother made a profession of faith in Christ.

"It isn't customary for politicians in Mexico to express religion," said Torres. "But David put his career on the line and shared his new-found faith with a group of government leaders." One of them was his brother, Victor, who made a profession of faith in Christ.

David and Irma Romero were invited to give their testimonies at the Texas Baptist Men convention, just prior to the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Austin in October.

"We can't do it," they told Torres. "Why not?" Torres asked.

"Because we're not married," Romero confessed.

"I can fix that," said Torres. "I can perform a wedding ceremony."

They made plans to be married at First Baptist Church of Weslaco, Texas, Saturday evening Nov. 26, and to be baptized the next morning.

When the Romeros arrived in Weslaco with their families and friends, Torres noticed her mother

seemed in great emotional turmoil. He inquired, and she admitted her anguish and confusion. Torres shared the gospel with her, and she accepted Christ.

Afterward, she said: "I'm at peace and very happy. I came with a terrible anguish. I didn't know what was going to happen, but I accepted Christ as my personal savior, and that's the reason this is the greatest day of my life."

David and Victor Romero's mother also said it was the greatest day of her life. "I've been praying day and night for my family to have an experience and know the Lord," she said. "The joy and peace that God gives is worth it all. The world cannot give this kind of peace."

Members of First Baptist prepared for the event with a supper and wedding cake.

A nine-member band from Beaumont Baptist Church in McAllen, Texas, played and sang, and Max Guzman, pastor of Rio Bravo Baptist Church in Tamaulipas, gave a brief pre-wedding message, emphasizing the divine nature of Christian marriage which, he said, "consecrates a man and woman uniquely to each other and to God."

Then as David and Irma Romero's three daughters and other members of their family stood by, the couple recited their wedding vows and placed rings on each other's fingers as symbols of their new relationship under Christ.

"I feel like I'm in the clouds," the new Mrs. Romero said. "I never dreamed this would come to pass. Marriage takes on so much more meaning than it ever could had I not known Christ as my savior."

She said she had wanted to foster Christian faith in her children but didn't have the foundation to do so: "I feared they might follow the same course I had. But now I no longer have that fear. Now they will have the reinforcement of a Christian mother and

father to help them around the pitfalls."

"Everything is beautiful, but there are so many like us who live together without the benefit of clergy," Romero added. "I want to tell them that they can have what we have."

"I look at politicians and wonder what they could be if they were Christians and how they could change the world. I believe we can help a world of people, just by sharing what the Lord has done for us. I'm willing to go anywhere to give my testimony."

After Torres baptized them following the Sunday morning services at First Baptist Church, Mrs. Romero said: "I feel so clean, so filled. I have a joy and peace I want to share with the whole world."

He added: "We came to be baptized because we understand what it means. I want this to be a testimony so other people can have the same experience we've had."

The mayor of San Fernando, who attended the wedding, has provided land for Baptists to begin two new churches in the Laguna Madre area, where some of the worst storm damage occurred.

After Leslie Mills, pastor of First Baptist Church of Weslaco, preached on Jesus' commandment that "you must be born again," at the Sunday morning services, Jose and Elisa Torres, friends of the Romeros from Ciudad Victoria, Mexico, made a public profession of faith in Christ. They announced that their home would be the site for beginning a new Baptist church in their city Jan. 8.

At lunch following the baptism of the Romeros, their oldest daughter, Dalia, accepted Christ.

"Only God knows how far the chain may reach as a result of Baptists' disaster relief to Mexico," said William H. Gray Jr., Texas partnership missions coordinator. "Out of the terrible destruction of Hurricane Gilbert, God's redemptive love has triumphed over tragedy."

"Life is too short . . ."

By Guy A. Hughes

I remember a day in the fourth grade, anxiously awaiting the 2:30 bell. I leaned forward in my seat, books in hand, staring at the clock on the wall, ready to make a dash at the first sound of the clanging bell. I recall thinking how slow a clock moved and pondered if it could be made to move faster.

Mrs. Crimm, my wise English teacher, seized the moment to teach us. The clock gave her one minute to teach an impatient audience unwilling to hear. It had to be a short sentence because soon her audience would disappear in a mad dash to the buses.

"Children," she began, "life is too short to live waiting for the next moment." I do not recall much after her remark except the puzzling look I gave my classmate next to me. For a fourth grader, life is far from too short.

The bell rang and the simple teaching I heard in 1968 was left behind in the recesses of my mind until a couple of months ago in 1988. My son had his calendar and was marking off the days until Christmas. He had

become quite impatient with waiting. He fussed and fumed about how slow was Christmas. Then, out of the blue, came the words of my wise teacher: "Son, life is too short to live waiting for the next moment." My memory had been jogged and I reminisced about the day in the fourth grade.

Much has changed since that afternoon in 1968. As for the fourth grader, his hair is getting grayer each day. He is praying for his son (who will be in the fourth grade soon) to have wise teachers, too. As for Mrs. Crimm, I heard her earthly life ran out and she has gone to be with the Lord.

As 1989 begins, I pray the Lord will help us live the year one day at a time. This life is too short to live fretting about when the next moment will come. May we labor for our God till we go to be with our Lord and Mrs. Crimm. I have a feeling her teaching will have changed, for in heaven life is never too short and is filled with countless moments!

Hughes is DOM, Yalobusha Association. This is a reprint from the 'Busha Baptist Bulletin.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

New or restructured?

Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention is now on the scene; and one can only wonder, "What next?" The poor old Southern Baptist Convention has already been subjected to two political groups, and here comes another one.

But wait! This group says that it is not political. The claim is that this group represents that broad group in the middle, the 99 percent who have never been a part of the political maneuverings. That will be great if it is the case.

Involved in the new group, however, are some who, in spite of the protests to the contrary, have been involved in political activity.

For instance, there was a wide mailing just before the Southern Baptist Convention last year of a pamphlet and a taped message that sought to influence the outcome of the election of the president. It was very close. Many feel that this is the reason that Richard Jackson did not get elected.

There is no reason why they shouldn't be involved in political actions. They are acting in opposition to another political group. But their intent, they say, is not to be political.

The comments of Paul Pressler, however, as quoted in Baptist Press, are no less questionable. He is quoted as saying that we don't need another political group. He surely is right about that; and he should know, for he is the driving force behind one of them.

Pressler is quoted as saying that the new group "appears to be a reorganization of the same people who for 10 years have been resisting a return to biblical theology."

He added, "Baptists need to be working together to promote the Cooperative Program, evangelism, and missions, not starting new political organizations that will be divisive and counterproductive to the welfare of the convention."

He is exactly right, but he needs to remember that he is one who helped to initiate the first splinter group, and he needs to realize that we can't go back to where we have never left. We still believe the Bible. We have always believed the Bible. We have never quit believing the Bible. The political cry of the "conservatives" is that we must get back to believing the Bible, and the fact is that we have never quit

believing it. A great denomination is experiencing untold trauma because of the cry that we need to get back to something we have never left.

So what about the new group, Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention? Winfred Moore, the highly respected pastor of First Church, Amarillo, seems to be the spokesman for the group. He came very close to being elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention and was first vice-president.

We want to believe that this is a group that will be able to call us back to unity even in the midst of our diversity. If it doesn't get involved in political maneuverings, perhaps it will be able to do that.

If it were to become another political machine, however, its efforts would be less than effective even if it were to win the presidency.

Controlling the presidency does not bring unity. We have seen that over the last 10 years. Unity will come with mutual trust in spite of diversity.

Can Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention bring that off? It might if it doesn't try to do it through political processes.

Guest opinion . . .

"And who is my neighbor?"

(Luke 10:29, RSV)

By Robert Parham

Few questions have been asked more often, sparked more turmoil, and produced more excuses than the question, "who is my neighbor?" It is a deeply troubling question, for the answer demands so much from us at such inconvenient times.

An already tough question becomes even more jarring when it is asked in the context of a crisis pregnancy. The answer jolts us into a new awareness about how the second great commandment to love our neighbor applies to the issue of abortion.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is a time which Southern Baptists have set aside in 1989 to think about the relationship between the national crisis of abortion and the Bible's mandate to love our neighbor.

Think about how you would answer the following questions: Is the unborn child a neighbor? Is the teenager in East Tennessee who is pregnant and homeless a neighbor? Is the professional woman in Georgia who has just had an abortion a neighbor? Is the male college student in Texas who refuses to bear any responsibility for an out-of-wedlock pregnancy a neighbor?

Next, think about how you can love your neighbor who faces the issue of abortion. Can you speak in defense of the unborn child in a society that places little value on children? Can you open your home to a teenager who wants to carry her child to term but has no home of her own? Can you of-

fer forgiveness without guilt to a woman who has had an abortion? Can you love an irresponsible male college student who views women as sexual objects and refuses to accept any responsibility for his sexually permissive behavior? Can you accept someone who disagrees with you on abortion?

Think about a statement adopted in 1987 by a diverse group of Southern Baptists.

- Human life from conception is sacred . . .

- Abortion at any stage of pregnancy is ending human life . . .

- In those incidents in which this divine ideal is not fulfilled, there can be redemption in God's grace. Therefore:

- Let us speak . . . against abortion on demand and . . . encourage alternatives to abortion.

Atheist government issues coin series commemorating Christianity

MOSCOW, U.S.S.R. (EP) — In yet another display of "glasnost," or "openness," the Soviet Union will begin distribution of a gold coin commemorating the millennium since Christianity reached Russia and became the religion of the state.

The commemorative coin is "physical evidence" of glasnost, said Luis Vigdor, executive vice president of MTB Banking Corporation, a New York dealer that will serve as the coin's only U.S. distributor. "It's bizarre for the Soviets to come out with a coin celebrating religion," he told the Wall Street Journal.

The one-ounce coin depicts Vladimir I, who introduced Christianity in Russia in 988, holding a large cross.

- Let us pledge ourselves to be compassionate, aggressive agents of God's grace in nurturing human life . . .

Not only is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday a time to think about abortion and love of neighbor, it is also a time to commit oneself to concrete action: Educate your children about Christian values concerning sex. Work at a Baptist home for children. Lobby for restrictive abortion laws in your state legislature. Support a special emphasis in your church on the sanctity of life. Offer financial support to those facing crisis pregnancies.

On Sunday, January 15, 1989, think about the relationship between abortion and love for your neighbor. Then, act!

Robert Parham is an associate director of the Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Guest Opinion . . .

The facts about abortion

By Paul Griffin Jones II

Abortion has become the most common of all surgical procedures worldwide. It is more common even than tonsillectomies. Worldwide, the World Health Organization has indicated that over 60 million abortions are performed every year — more than 25 percent of all pregnancies.

In the United States, more than three of every 10 pregnancies end in abortion. Since the 1973 Supreme Court decision which legalized abortion on demand, over 22 million unborn children have been destroyed. Approximately 1.5 million abortions are performed annually in the United States. It is also estimated that a third of all abortions are performed on teenagers.

The risks that accompany abortion are often left undiscussed. Seventy-seven percent of women having an abortion experience acute grief reaction. One of every two experience emotional and psychological disturbances. One in four experience complications in future pregnancies. One in six will experience future miscarriages.

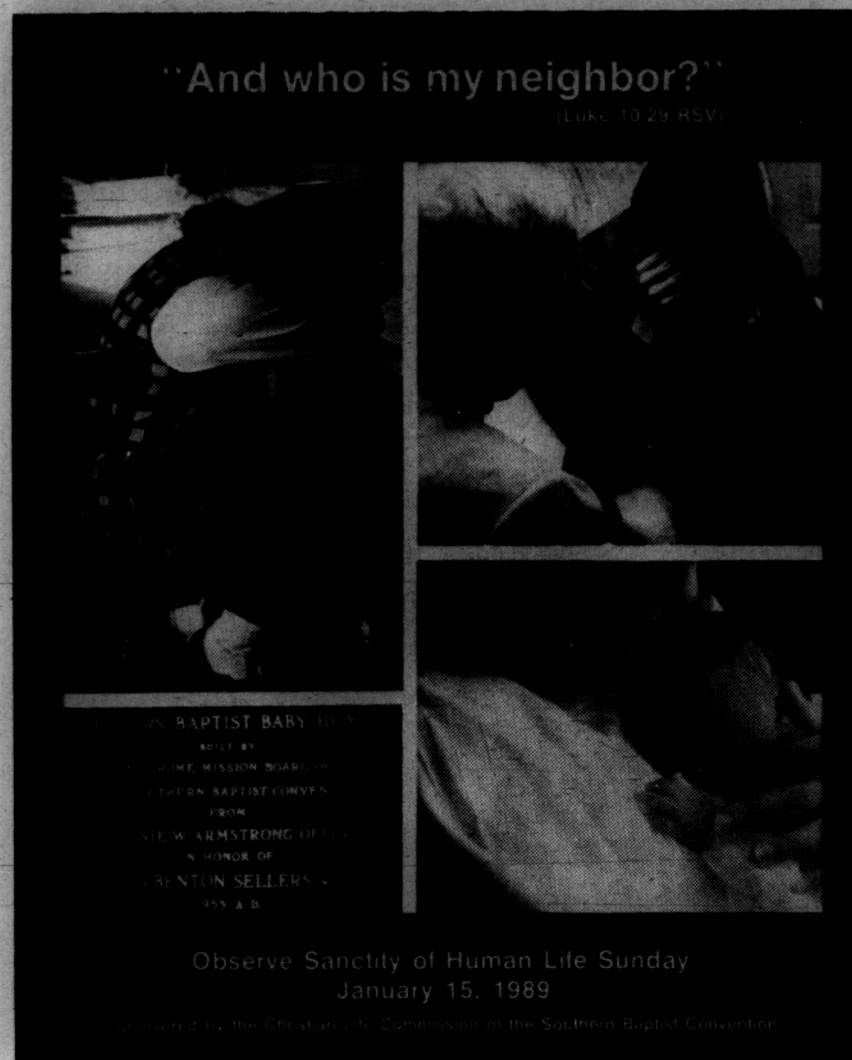
The potential physical and psychological effects of an abortion are numerous: sterility, stillborn, menstrual disturbances, bleeding, infection, shock, coma, perforated uterus, pain, guilt, suicidal impulses, sense of loss, mourning, regret and remorse, hostility, anger and rage, despair, helplessness, and/or desire to remember death date. The person

seeking an abortion is usually not told what might be experienced after an abortion. One woman who experienced an abortion has said that "my doctor didn't tell me about the possible profuse bleeding and infection that lasted for weeks. And he never said anything about the possibility of the hysterectomy I had to have eight months later."

According to pollster Louis Harris, 68 percent of all Americans think "it is against God's will to destroy the life of an unborn baby," and 60 percent believe "a fetus should have rights, just like all other human beings." The church must decide "to 'choose life' (Deut. 30:19) and work to provide the alternatives to abortion. For the Christian, there is the conviction that every human being is made in the image of God. Life is sacred and the only gentle way to terminate a pregnancy is childbirth.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, January 15, is an opportunity for Southern Baptist churches in Mississippi to affirm their belief in the sanctity of human life. This day of prayer and proclamation is a day to prophetically speak out against abortion and to affirm the historic position of the Christian church as it has chosen and affirmed life for innocent humanity.

Paul Jones is executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.



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What is there about Philadelphia?

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: . . . I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it. . . . (Rev. 4:7,8).

Eugene H. Dobbs is chairman of the Executive Committee, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which is the Search Committee for a successor to Earl Kelly, executive director-treasurer, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Kelly has announced that he will retire Aug. 15, 1989. Dobbs is pastor of First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Miss.

Betty Dobbs is one of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union's nine area coordinators who are charged with the responsibility of nominating a successor to Wilda Fancher, current state WMU president. Mrs. Fancher, wife of James Fancher, pastor of First Church, Monticello, is in her fifth year as state president. A new president is to be nominated and elected during this year's WMU annual meeting at Colonial Hills Church, Southaven,

March 20-21. Betty Dobbs is wife of Eugene H. Dobbs, pastor of First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Miss.

Glenn Perry, businessman, and member of First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, Miss., was vice-chairman of the Executive Committee, MBCB, in 1973, when Earl Kelly was elected by the convention board as executive director-treasurer, on July 5 of that year. According to action of the board in 1971, the body's Executive Committee had been given the responsibility of nominating a person to fill the office of executive secretary "when such vacancy occurs." Early in 1973, Douglas Hudgins announced his retirement, set for November 13 of that year. At that time Earl Kelly, pastor of Ridgecrest Church, Jackson, was chairman of the Executive Committee. Glenn Perry, vice-chairman, reported to the board that the committee was submitting the name of Dr. Kelly over his objections because "it felt that Dr. Kelly was, because of training, experience, knowledge of the work, and commitment to the cause, the best qualified person for the position."



Executive Committee: These are the new officers of the MBCB Executive Committee. They are, from left, Larry Otis, Tupelo, vice chairman; Eugene Dobbs, Philadelphia, chairman; and Rex Yancey, Quitman, secretary.

"Preachers' revival" set for Meridian, Feb. 6-8

By Guy Henderson

It has been called "Preachers' Revival" and the "Praise, Information, and Inspiration" meeting. It is the state Evangelism Conference, Feb. 6-8 at First Baptist Church, Meridian.

"Making Jesus Your Lord" is the theme and church staffers plus lay persons are invited.

Great singing and strong preaching has been the hallmark of the conference. This year will be no exception. We have evangelists, pastors, directors of missions, and lay people on the program.

Topics for church staffers such as Your Devotional Life, Soul Winning, Your Study Time, Your Possessions, Your Home, and Your Work and Leisure will be covered.

Inspiring music led by the Singing Churchmen, solos, duets, and quartets will be heard. Special groups, such as vocational evangelists, bi-vocational pastors, and others will be hosting breakfasts, luncheons, and dinner meetings.

An information booth for the 1990 Simultaneous Revival, Foreign Mission Board opportunities, and a well-stocked Baptist Book Store display will be in the fellowship hall.

Fellowship is another strong feature of the conference. Many pastors travel together, stay together, and pray together. This encouragement factor does much to strengthen the conference and the individual.

Guy Henderson is director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Evangelism Department which sponsors the event.

New writers begin lesson commentaries

Three new writers of Sunday School lesson commentaries began a six-months stint with the January 1, 1989, lessons printed in the Dec. 22, 1988, issue of the Baptist Record. They will continue writing through June of this year.

The three are Bert Breland, who will discuss the Bible Book series; J. Greg Martin, who will comment on the Life and Work lessons; and Gary G. Berry, who will do the commentaries on the Uniform series.

Breland, pastor of North Greenwood Church, Greenwood, was born at Columbia, Miss. He is a graduate of Pascagoula High School and Mississippi College, and has a master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary. Before going to Greenwood in 1986, he had served pastorates at First, Highland Park, Louisville, Ky., and at Lawn Haven Church, Laurel.

In Kentucky, he was a member of the Baptist Convention's Executive Board. In Mississippi, he has served as a Sunday School leadership specialist for the state Baptist convention. He and his wife, Micah Rene, have three children.

Berry, pastor of First Church, McComb, since 1986 previously served pastorates at First, Batesville; Crossgates, Brandon; First, Taylorsville; and Bayou View, Gulfport. Born at Magee, Miss., he was graduated

from Magee High School and William Carey College. He has master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from New Orleans Seminary. He and his wife, Janet, have two children.

Berry has been a member of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, a trustee of Clarke College, and a trustee of the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center.

He has served on the Order of Business Committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, as vice president of the Mississippi Baptist Pastors' Conference, and as a member of the SBC Credentials Committee.

Martin, pastor of Commission Road Baptist Church, Long Beach, since 1986, previously was pastor of First Church, Richard City, Tenn. In 1982 he was summer youth pastor for First Baptist Church, Swartz Creek, Mich.

Martin, a graduate of Bryan College, received the master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary. Born at Chattanooga, Tenn., in 1963, he is married to the former Laura Wilson. They have a four-month-old son.

Martin was founder of and preacher for Visions for Youth Radio Ministries, Chattanooga. He delivered a series of

(Continued on page 4)

The Second Front Page

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, January 12, 1989

Published Since 1877

Convention budget met; letters to treasurers cited

By Tim Nicholas

Mississippi Baptists gave just under \$2 million in December to their Cooperative Program, to boost their 1988 budget past their own expectations to total \$19,134,385 for the year.

The announcement of the total was released by Earl Kelly, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which receives the funds and passes them on to recipient organizations authorized by Mississippi Baptist churches.

The Cooperative Program is an effort by Southern Baptists to adequately fund their missions, education, and leadership training operations through a unified budget plan. More than one-third of all gifts given by Mississippi Baptists goes to Southern

Baptist causes outside the state.

The 1988 budget set by Mississippi Baptists in their 1987 annual convention was \$18,915,000. The actual income was \$219,385 more than that amount. The 1988 total was \$746,800 more than that received the previous year, or a 4.06 percent increase.

December gifts of \$1,945,254 were the largest single month of giving to the Cooperative Program in Mississippi. The previous high was in January of 1986 when \$1,944,314 was tallied.

At the end of November of last year, the budget was behind by \$149,619.

Kelly indicated that the December record may be partially attributed to letters written to church treasurers.

"Because it appeared we would

have a substantial shortfall at the end of the 1988 budget, an urgent letter was sent to all church treasurers requesting that all 1988 mission funds be sent to our office by December 30, 1988," said Kelly.

"The response from the churches was exciting because the churches contributed the largest amount to the Cooperative Program in history," Kelly added, "At this point in time one cannot determine if this large December offering will affect the January, 1989 offering."

Kelly said that the budget overage will be proportioned out to each of the state and Southern Baptist Convention agencies at the same ratio as they received from the budget.

Report claims Southeastern misses mark in 3 of 4 areas

By Marv Knox

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — Southeastern Seminary does not conform to some accreditation standards in three of four areas of institutional life, according to an accrediting agency report.

A special study committee of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' Commission on Colleges visited the seminary here Sept. 14-16, and seminary officials released its report in December.

Both of the seminary's accrediting agencies — the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada — are investigating the Southern Baptist Convention school.

The studies follow 15 months of change at Southeastern.

In October 1987, the trustees' new

conservative majority succeeded in altering the way the school chooses its teachers. The process placed more responsibility with the president, who is accountable directly to the trustees. It also dictated that temporary faculty appointments, which had been the prerogative of the president and the dean of the faculty, must be approved by the trustee instruction committee.

President W. Randall Lolley, Dean Morris Ashcraft, and six other administrators subsequently resigned. Lolley and Ashcraft cited the policy changes — which they interpreted as ensuring that only biblical inerrantists could be added to the faculty and as dismantling their apparatus for allowing faculty leadership in selecting new teachers — as the reason for their decisions.

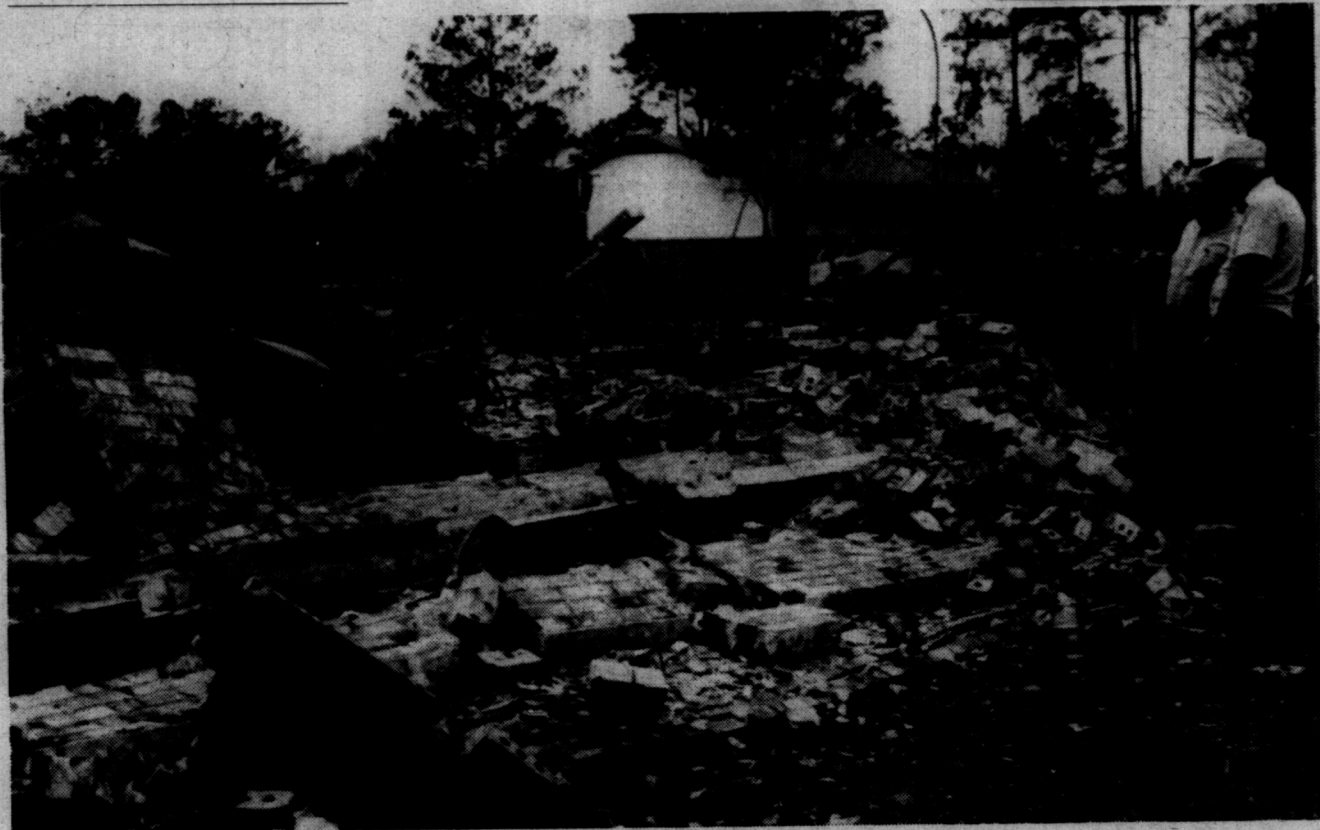
Trustees elected Lewis A. Drummond, evangelism professor at Southern Seminary, as president in March. A new dean has not been elected.

The Southern Association committee's report says Southeastern does not conform to some elements of its accreditation criteria with regard to faculty selection, academic freedom, and organization and administration. And while it does not cite violations of its criteria concerning the effectiveness of the institution, it raises "serious questions" concerning that issue.

Regarding faculty selection, the report cites four areas of concern.

The first involves eligibility requirements for faculty membership. "The conflict with the criteria arises

(Continued from page 5)



Pictured are Rhodes and Brock at the site of the burned Central Church, McNeill, with the youth building in the background. Photo by Tim Nicholas

Central Church, McNeill, burns

The 6,000-ft. sanctuary and education space of Central Church, McNeill, burned to the ground the Sunday before Christmas in a fire that McNeill fire chief Melvin Glidewell said was of undetermined origin.

Glidewell, a church member, said that no arson was suspected, though. The Dec. 18 evening service had only been over a short time when the building was discovered engulfed in

flames.

Eight fire trucks responded, "but there was nothing we could do from the time it got up in the attic," said Glidewell. He said another accidental fire 10 years ago partially destroyed the church.

Building committee chairman J.C. Brock said the 200-member church will meet in the adjacent youth building for the present and will add

six classrooms to that structure.

Brock, a retired building contractor, estimated that roughly it will take \$300,000 to replace the building. He said they had \$150,000 insurance on the building and \$17,000 on contents.

Pearl River County Association director of missions Kenneth Rhodes has offered volunteer help through disaster relief as has the state Brotherhood Department.

"Straight from the Heart" — missions conference is designed for youths

The annual Mississippi Baptist Youth Missions Conference will take place Mar. 24-25 at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Pass Christian. "Straight from the Heart" is the theme.

The program is designed for all youths, interested leaders, and interested college students. It will feature missionaries from around the world who will interact with the students and give students opportunities to know about life on the mis-

sion field — at home and abroad.

Special guests for the conference will be James Lewis, pastor of Fifteenth Ave. Church, Meridian. Musicians will be Sean and Pam Keith of Clarksdale Church, Clarksdale.

Participants may make reservations for this conference on a first come, first served basis. However, all reservations must be postmarked Feb. 1 or later.

Mail reservations to Youth Missions Conference, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Henderson Point, Pass Christian, MS 39751. Cost is \$26 which must be included with registration. An adult sponsor must accompany every seven or fewer youths.

The program is sponsored by the Brotherhood and Woman's Missionary Union departments of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Black Student Retreat to be at Garaywa

"Touching Lives Through Jesus Christ" is the theme of the annual Black Student Retreat, Feb. 3-4 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton.

Platform leaders include Herbert Brisbane, Jerry Young, Sheldon Gooch. Brisbane is minister of missions and adult ministries at Brentwood Baptist Church, Houston, Tex. Young is pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Jackson. And Gooch is a concert artist from Jackson.

Sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Student Union, the retreat costs \$10 per person which includes meals, lodging, and conference materials. Registration begins on Friday, Feb. 3 at 5 p.m.

For more information, contact Mrs. Jessie Dawson, 3925 Sunset Dr., Jackson, MS 39213, phone 366-1405, ext 16.



Mississippian among Memorial officers

New officers of Baptist Memorial Health Care System surveyed the corporation's flagship, Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis with President Joseph H. Powell (right) after their election to one year terms December 13. They are (from left) Chairman Herbert T. Conley of Corinth, Mississippi; First Vice Chairman Robert E. Flowers of Memphis; Second Vice Chairman Tommy Hargrove of Holly Grove, Arkansas; and Secretary S. Powers Smith of Henning, Tennessee.

Radio-TV to get \$375,000 in ACTS sale extension

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission would receive up to \$375,000 under terms of an agreement to grant a second extension for closing the sale of the ACTS network to a for-profit corporation.

The extension of the closing date to March 14, 1989, was granted at the scheduled Dec. 13 meeting of the executive committee of the RTVC trustees at the request of Friends of ACTS, a group of investors based in San Antonio, Texas. Commission spokesmen said the Friends of ACTS private sale offering document is due to expire on that date.

Friends of ACTS, a private corporation headed by San Antonio, Texas, advertising executive Center (Chip) Atkins, originally was scheduled to complete the sale Sept. 15 under a contract with the RTVC signed June 9. The contract calls for Friends of ACTS to continue the programming policies currently in effect for the network and provide up to 35 hours per week of time for commission-produced programs for 30 years.

In addition, the commission is to be paid \$11 million at closing. The network is to purchase RTVC programming to be used on the network at the rate of \$2 million per year for 11 and one-half years, and pay a 3 percent override on advertising income for 30 years.

Atkins said the offering document could not be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission until Sept. 14, and his group did not have enough time to get the \$20 million investment package committed as required by

the contract. A spokesman for Friends of ACTS said, "The SEC knew what it was doing when it established a six-month time for private placement documents."

In exchange for the extension of time, the purchasers have agreed to pay the \$85,000 monthly satellite transponder fee on behalf of ACTS and a \$40,000 monthly payment toward the RTVC operating budget. If the full three months is required to complete the purchase, Friends of ACTS would provide \$375,000 toward the operation of ACTS and the RTVC, according to Atkins.

The executive committee also reviewed financial reports for 1987-88 and the first two months of the 1988-89 fiscal years. They also asked Friends of ACTS to make a progress report to the full commission at its next meeting Jan. 9-10, 1989.

Clarke begins spring semester

Spring semester, 1989, at Clarke College, Newton, gets under way with the opening of residence halls on Sunday, Jan. 15, at 2 p.m.

Registration will be held, Jan. 17 in Sanders Memorial Library at 8:30 a.m.

Classes begin, Jan. 18. Those interested in night classes may register at the first class meeting. For more information on courses offered in Meridian and on the Clarke campus, call the office of Admissions and Financial Aid, 683-2061.

MasterLife alums to hold meet

Jimmy Crowe of the Leadership Development Section, Church Training Department of the Sunday School



Crowe

Board, will be the speaker for a banquet of MasterLife Alumni on Feb. 7 during the Evangelism Conference.

The banquet will be hosted by the Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church at 5 p.m. This will be between the afternoon and evening sessions of the state Evangelism Conference being conducted at First Church, Meridian.

Crowe wrote Church Leader Training Handbook, released 1970, and has written an expanded edition called, The Church Leader Training Handbook, Revised Edition, released in 1974.

Reservations for the dinner meeting may be made with the Church Training Department, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, or by calling 601-968-3800. The tickets are \$3 each.

Lesson writers . . .

(Continued from page 3)
devotionals over WLOX-TV in Biloxi during 1988.

Martin was a member of the Tellers Committee for the 1988 Mississippi Baptist Convention. He is a resource person for the "Here's Hope 1990 Simultaneous Revival Emphasis" of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. In October, 1988, he preached in Parana, Argentina, during a volunteers in missions trip.

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Report claims Southeastern misses mark in 3 of 4 areas

(Continued from page 3)
from recent actions and statements by the board of trustees and its members which indicate that an additional criterion has been introduced as a requirement for faculty membership," the report says.

The report identifies belief in biblical inerrancy as a new requirement for faculty eligibility and notes "that the additional requirement was adopted without consultation with the administration or faculty of the school, that there has been no formal board action, that the procedures for amending the bylaws have not been followed, and that published statements do not accord with present practice. It appears that the seminary's traditional understandings of faculty eligibility have been informally and arbitrarily changed."

The second concern, faculty participation in appointments, has been "redefined as consultative, and its former role to designate and to recommend candidates was assumed by the trustee committee on instruction," the report states. "It would be difficult to overestimate the effects of these actions on the faculty. Their sense is that they have been effectively removed from the process and that their ability to exercise their responsibility has been seriously curtailed. Certainly it would appear that the board of trustees has exceeded its policy-making functions and is presently engaged in the administration of academic policy and appointments."

The third concern, selection of part-time faculty, involves a change in policy that removed responsibility from the president and dean and vested it with the president, with approval of the trustee instruction committee.

"This change in policy has had any number of unfortunate consequences," the report notes. "First, the arbitrary nature of the decision... overturns established procedure and has created immense confusion in efforts to maintain an orderly curriculum... Second, the action essentially removes faculty from participation in such appointments and further curtails their ability to fulfill their academic responsibility."

The fourth concern, the dean's selection process, involves a "lack of clarity about procedure (that has) created an impasse," the report says. It cites "apparent misunderstandings" between faculty and trustees, with the faculty operating according

to previous procedure and trustees conducting a search according to the same procedure as for faculty appointment.

The report describes the four faculty-selection concerns as "deleterious to the life and well-being of the seminary." It adds: "Apparently the board of trustees considers changes in the makeup of the Southern Baptist Convention a mandate to change the character of the seminary. It has sought to bring this about by rather arbitrarily infringing upon the established traditions of the institution and ignoring its integrity."

Turning to academic freedom, the report says, "The seminary is not functioning effectively as a scholarly community at present; nor is it functioning in conformity with the criteria."

Theological seminaries have a right not to employ teachers whose views are "substantially at variance" with the schools' founding principles, the report acknowledges. But new trustees who have sought to follow what they believe to be a convention mandate to hire biblical inerrantists on the faculty have done so "without regard for due process, institutional traditions and principles of academic freedom," it says.

The report cites 10 allegations that academic freedom has been violated, including the SBC Peace Committee's 1986 investigation of "the theological convictions of faculty members without due notification and faculty participation"; "intrusion of the board of trustees into traditional areas of faculty prerogative through the expanded role of its committee on instruction"; trustees' "interrogation of applicants for faculty positions concerning their views of biblical inerrancy"; trustee visits to classrooms without prior notification or professors' consent; "denial of married student housing to a divorced minority female student with one child on the grounds that hers does not constitute a legitimate family"; and "a general academic environment characterized by distrust, distress and disenchantment."

Addressing organization and administration, the report notes: "The current board understands well its accountability to the Southern Baptist Convention and rightfully is attentive to its wishes and desires. In fact, ... the majority of the board of trustees expressed to the committee and have expressed publicly that it is

their intention to make the seminary into the kind of institution they understand the majority of the Southern Baptist Convention desires.

"The board of trustees, however, should also be mindful of its obligation to the seminary as an institution in its own right... The charter granted to this institution, and under which it operates in the state of North Carolina, makes demands upon the board, too."

The report faults the board for failure "to keep itself free from 'undue pressure from political, religious and other external bodies,' as required by Southern Association policies. Similarly, the reports finds 'the seminary again not in compliance with (the guideline) which requires 'protecting the administration from external pressures.' " And it says the seminary violates Southern Association policy by failing to give faculty a "meaningful role" in "shared governance" of the school.

The report reminds individual trustees of requirements that "no individual committee or member of the board can take official action for it unless authorized to do so." It says of faculty: "They have an obligation to seek a solution, too. They must take the initiative to seek ways to be in conversation with the board and its leadership... They, too, must be reminded to avoid airing grievances in public."

While the report does not cite violations of Southern Association guidelines regarding institutional effectiveness, it says: "Institutional effectiveness is low at this moment in the history of the seminary... The effect of recent changes in governance has had serious, adverse impact upon institutional effectiveness."

Examples of "institutional ineffectiveness" include "open and public conflict between the faculty and the trustees"; "the prolonged impasse over the appointment of a new dean"; "delayed appointment of faculty members for the spring term, 1989"; and "decline in enrollment (that) has serious implications for financial stability."

Trustee Chairman Robert D. Crowley, pastor of Montrose Baptist Church in Rockville, Md., said the trustees' instructional committee has responded to the Southern Association, but the response will not be made public until it is considered by the full board.

Marv Knox is BP feature editor.

Smith, Thornton to lead single adult winter retreat



Thornton



Smith

Underscoring the theme "The Adventure of Change," Ann Smith, a lecturer and seminar leader from Asheville, N.C., and Larry L. Thornton of Delta State University, will serve as resource persons at the Annual Winter Retreat for Single Adults. The sessions at Alta Woods Baptist Church will begin at 7 p.m. Friday, January 27 and conclude at 3 p.m. the next day. Among other participating

on the program will be Duane McDaniel, minister of single adults, First, Jackson. The registration fee of \$8 includes breakfasts and lunch on Saturday and materials, and requires advance registration by Jan. 25 with check mailed to Single Adult Ministry, Box 530, Jackson 39205. Registration fee at the door without meals is \$4 for any part of sessions. The Retreat is sponsored by the Family Ministry Section of the Church Training Department of the Mississippi Baptists Convention Board.

Ann Alexander Smith is a former staffer at First, Jackson.

She is the author of two program helps "How to Start a Single Adult Ministry" and "Divorce Adjustment Workshop: A leaders guide." Larry L. Thornton is professor of psychology, guidance and counseling at Delta State and conducts a private practice in counseling.

Cruger Baptist Church retires sanctuary debt

At the close of the evening worship service on Dec. 18, the members of Cruger Church, Cruger, celebrated the retirement of the debt on the sanctuary which was constructed in 1986-1987.

The first service of worship in the new edifice was held on Jan. 25, 1987, with the final payment being made on Dec. 13, 1988.

The church used the "TOGETHER WE BUILD... TO THE GLORY OF GOD" theme and dedicated the new building on March 15, 1987. The building was designed by Dennis E. Wixon, architect, and was constructed by Pullen Construction Company.

Constructed with red brick exterior, with oak furnishings on the interior, with a Peevy sound system and facilities for the hearing-impaired, the sanctuary seats 200 and the building includes a pastor's study and storage areas. Most of the furnishings were memorial gifts.

The debt began at nearly \$125,000 and was paid off in less than two years by the membership of under 100, ac-

cording to church clerk, M. L. Gordon. The sanctuary is situated on land donated in 1902 by the J. H. McGee family. The original frame building was given to the Spring Lake M.B. Church and was removed to their location approximately three miles east of Cruger. This allowed the new sanctuary to be erected on the exact land which had been designated for Cruger Baptist.

The members of the building committee were: Mrs. Karlis Gercens, H. L. Gordon, O. W. Harris, Greg Householder, Vernon Lehman and Mrs. Fred Lindsey. Randy Futral is pastor.

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Foundation sets record in asset value

NASHVILLE (BP) — The Southern Baptist Foundation set records in asset value and income production during the 1987-88 fiscal year, SBF trustees learned during their annual meeting Dec. 6-7 in Nashville.

Market value of SBF assets climbed \$6,413,023, to a record \$67,816,478, reported President Hollis E. Johnson III.

The market value increase represented a 10.46 percent gain, compared to a book value increase of 15.64 percent, Johnson said. The difference was caused by "the tremendous decline in stock prices during the first month of the year," October 1987, when the stock market crashed, he explained.

SBF policies and practices enabled the financial institution to thrive, despite the "Black Monday" crash, he noted: "The large cash position and policy of owning top-tier quality growth stocks enabled the foundation to successfully weather the unprecedented market decline. In fact, the growth fund operated to pool investments of many accounts actually increased in value during the year, due to investment in real estate, which appreciated."

The SBF's record income of \$4,645,582 marked the highlight of the year, Johnson said. That amount was an \$855,975 — or 22.59 percent — gain over the previous year.

The SBF aided nine Baptist state

foundations during the year, he said. It provided help with investment management, investment counseling, trust accounting, disbursement of income to clients, and filing tax returns.

Southern Baptists' return on their investment in the SBF operating budget also set a record, Johnson noted. The convention's \$283,800 allocation produced a return of \$16.37 per \$1 allocated, compared to \$8.94 to \$1 a decade earlier.

Trustees elected officers during the meeting. They are Chairman Gorman J. Roberts, an investment banker and member of Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.; Vice Chairman Clarence Edmonds, an accountant and member of Brentwood Baptist Church in the Nashville area;

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Dr. William Hendricks
Professor of Christian Theology, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

"Koran can help Muslims understand Jesus"

By Art Toalston

ROCKVILLE, Va. (BP) — The Koran itself says Jesus was "faultless." Dudley Woodberry, a Christian expert on Islam, thinks that claim and other verses from Islam's holy book are "stepping stones towards Christ" for Muslims.

Woodberry, assistant professor of Islamic studies at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif., led a workshop Nov. 7-11 at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va.

Woodberry's Christian work overseas has included two years in Lebanon, five in Pakistan, three in Afghanistan, and three in Saudi Arabia. He has written two books on Islam to be released during the coming year.

Muslims generally regard Mohammed as sinless, but the Koran itself does not, Woodberry noted. In several passages, Mohammed is told to seek forgiveness for sin — "sins of the past and those to come," as one verse puts it.

But Jesus, who is counted with several Old Testament figures as an Islamic prophet, is described as faultless in the Koran's 19th chapter, Woodberry said. The specific verse varies in different systems used for dividing the Koran's 114 chapters. Chapters in the Koran are called "suras."

He cited sura 3, verse 49, in the

Koran as another verse affirming Jesus' uniqueness. It says Jesus gave sight to the blind, healed lepers and raised the dead. The Koran attributes no such miracles to Mohammed, although Muslims generally believe he performed miracles. They also regard the revelation of the Koran to Mohammed over a 22-year period as miraculous, Woodberry said.

In sura 10, verse 19, Jesus is called "the word of God." The Arabic language of the verse seems to mean that God created Jesus by speaking his creative word into Mary's womb, Woodberry said.

Although not in the Koran, two other passages in authoritative Islamic writings assert that every human is "touched" by Satan at birth except for Jesus and the Virgin Mary, he added.

Other Koranic verses describe Jesus as "a statement of the truth," and "a sign." Muslim tradition teaches that a sign of the approaching day of judgment will be Jesus' bodily return to earth, he said. Muslims believe Jesus will face death and that he and all other people will be resurrected for the judgment, he noted.

Three verses in the Koran also affirm the Bible, Woodberry said. In sura 3, verse 2, Mohammed is told that the Koranic revelation confirms "what was already present, as he (God) revealed the Torah and gospel before." In sura 10, verse 94, Mohammed is counseled to resolve

any doubts by asking "those who read the Scriptures before you."

Such Koranic passages can help Christians who encounter Muslims to "start on common ground before we get to those very crucial areas where we differ," Woodberry said.

Three Koranic verses generally have been interpreted as meaning that the Bible has been corrupted, he said. The Koran denies that anyone could be the Son of God and denies that Jesus was crucified. Sura 4, verse 157, says Christ only "appeared" to have been crucified.

And Mohammed's centrality in Islam, Woodberry said, arises from numerous Koranic references to him, including the distinction of being the final prophet or "the seal of the prophets." Over the course of several centuries after Mohammed's death in A.D. 632, Muslims intensified their reverence for him largely as a reaction to Jesus' centrality in Christianity, the professor said.

Various dynamics have spurred Muslims to embrace Christ as the Son of God, Woodberry said. In a few instances, Muslims have been convinced simply by the references to Christ in the Koran. One underground group of Christians in Africa traces its start to this kind of realization, he reported.

Some Muslims compare Mohammed to Christ and turn to Christ. "Mohammed was a man of great stature," Woodberry said. "Yet he was

a very warlike person who fought, raided caravans, even raided one caravan in a sacred month when even pagan Arabs would not raid caravans. He killed a poet who wrote sarcastic poems about him.

"When you compare this with Jesus Christ in the gospels, who was sinless and said to turn the other cheek, and when you see the beauty of the Sermon on the Mount and other teachings of our Lord, it becomes rather obvious that Jesus is far more than a prophet."

Numerous Muslims embrace Christ after visions and dreams, he said, noting dreams were a phenomenon he noticed during two years of gathering case studies of Muslim conversions.

In Afghanistan, for example, a Muslim recounted a vision of a man in white standing at a fork in the road saying, "Go this way; don't go that way." The Muslim felt he should ask a Christian about the vision, and he readily embraced the Christian's interpretation: John the Baptist was pointing him to Jesus.

A young Muslim woman in the Middle East embraced Christianity after seeing stars in the sky take the shape of a cross.

And many Muslims come to Christ in the midst of a personal crisis. "Because Jesus is considered the miracle prophet, Muslims are quite happy to have Christians pray for them when they are sick or in difficult circumstances," Woodberry said.

"They may even be happy for Christians to pray in Jesus' name."

In seeking to spread the gospel among Muslims, Christians "have to win the right to be heard" because of centuries of hostility between the two faiths, Woodberry stressed. Outreach "has to be based on the fact that we have become genuine friends, and we really are willing to share our lives with them, whether or not they become Christians."

Christians must be willing to receive from Muslims, most of whom come from cultures placing a high premium on hospitality, he added.

In referring to the Koran, Christians should be careful to say, "The Koran says..." and not "Mohammed said..." Muslims believe the Koran is the actual speech of God, he explained.

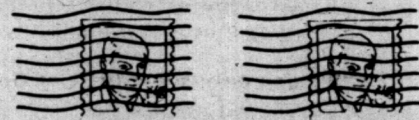
And Christians should remember "there is a whole spectrum of Muslims. We see only one part of the spectrum in the militant activists on our television screens," Woodberry said. "There are also extremely pious, gentle Muslims."

By developing such awarenesses, he concluded, Christians may find many opportunities to share with Muslim friends "how our Christian faith helps us handle problems or how we feel the presence of God in trying times — and then build from there."

Art Toalston writes for the FMB.



Letters to the editor



Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld. The withholding of names will be at the discretion of the editor.

Restoration or judgment?

Editor:

When we go to a prison, we offer deliverance through Jesus Christ — deliverance from the bondage of unforgiven sin. Some will get deliverance from prison, but the majority will get deliverance through prison. That is, because of prison they are ready to receive the gospel. And the gospel of Christ sets men free! (John 8:36). They learn that God isn't as interested in getting them out of prison as he is in dealing with those things in their lives that got them in prison.

I see that one of the major obstacles to jail/prison ministry is that many Christians have the misconception that we are striving to get people out of prison. Not so! We just want to make sure that when they do get out, they come back home as followers of Jesus Christ, not as followers of the devil. Also, many Christians, including their leaders, do not see the need to restore and accept our brothers and sisters behind bars. The church has been guilty of seeing prisoners as "non-persons," falling below the level of caring, of ministry, of acceptability.

It is our prayer that we might be able to see prison inmates not merely as outcasts, but see them as God sees them, as precious in his sight; as just as deserving or undeserving of the blood of Christ as we are, yet who got "caught" in their rebelliousness. As Christians, we need to learn to see

prisoners not only as they are, but also as they can be in Christ. If we are not spiritual enough to minister to the fallen and the outcast, we are probably carnal enough to fall ourselves.

God sees them as worth restoring. We are to be the instruments of Restoration. (Matt. 25:36).

"...ye which are spiritual, restore..." (Gal. 6:1).

God allows us the option of being obedient to HIM by engaging in the ministry of Restoration or being rebellious and judgmental.

Jesus today still does not "call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." His invitation to be saved is not to those who, like the proud Pharisees, brag about their self-righteousness. His salvation is for those who, like the publican, cry out "be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13).

Let us be about His ministry of Restoration.

Sid L. Taylor, pastor Temple Baptist Church, Forest Mississippi and founder and director Prison Evangelism Outreach, Inc., Ocean Springs, Mississippi 39564.

Hope to remain

Editor:

Thank you for your sensitive editorial, "Don't go Away," (Baptist Record, Dec. 15, 1988) acknowledging values you perceive in the Southern Baptist Alliance and expressing the hope that this growing organization, of which I am a member, will not desert the good ship SBC.

Midway in your piece you pretty well state the central problem: "Will we (presumably SBC) choose our members; or will we allow them to choose us? And if they choose us, will we say to some, 'Sorry, you don't fit.'" These questions, though never asked, continue to be answered by the SBC majority leadership. Before inception of the SBA the open-minded search for truth it now fosters was labeled "a cancer that must be removed." Since this utterance in March 1984 I have heard no voice of reconciliation nor observed any relenting of inquisitions in our institutions.

A Southern Baptist I am and hope to remain. I, and other SBA members of my knowledge, accept as equally "Baptist" our fellow believers who are of fundamentalist-inerrantist conviction; and we hope for their acceptance of us as well. It may not be appropriate that we (as you suggest) "try to bring things back to where they are more to our liking." Rather, for us it appears to be a matter of integrity that we continue to pursue individual interpretation of scripture as we feel led by the Holy Spirit and persevere in reaching toward priesthood. These endeavors we regard as seminal to Baptist doctrine, and we would ask for prayer support of all Baptists as we struggle in them.

Glen Pearson
Hattiesburg

Thank you. You stated your purpose and interests much better than I did. — Editor

The Lady Bugs

Editor:

I am a member of First Church, McHenry. A blessing from our God has come to my husband and me in the form of a group called The Lady

Bugs Club. My husband has lung cancer and undergoes treatments every day. We drive around 70 miles a day from McHenry to Hattiesburg. We have no insurance and no income except what I make housecleaning and his Social Security benefits. The Lady Bugs gave us a gift of money to help us cover travel expense. They didn't even know us but knew that we were in need. God bless The Lady Bugs Club of Wiggins.

Mrs. James L. Loper
McHenry

Beauty of Christmas

Editor:

Although Christmas is past, the beauty of it remains when Christ shows his love in a unique manner.

My next door neighbor is a cancer patient who has only one lung and has suffered two heart attacks. It is my privilege to do volunteer work in a nursing home. Though she is unable to accompany me, she sends gifts of stationary, books, whatever. She has set up pen pal relationships with the patients in the home.

As our Lord said, "...and the greatest of these is love."

Name withheld by editor

Chapel for Brazil

Editor:

In a recent World Missions Conference the members of the Cloverdale Baptist Church in Natchez heard Mrs. Victor Johnston tell of the need for the construction of a chapel in the town of Piracuruca, Piaui, Brazil. Mrs. Johnston told us that the chapel would be pre-fabricated and could be constructed for \$5,000. The church later voted to send the \$5,000 to the Foreign Mission Board for the construction of this chapel. The Foreign Mission Board now has the money and

it is in the process of being sent to Piracuruca, Piaui, Brazil.

Ray Walters, pastor
Cloverdale Church
Natchez

A mission-minded church

Editor:

First Baptist Church, Vicksburg, Mississippi, will be observing her 150th anniversary in 1989. Through the years, this church has had a keen interest in missions.

In November, the church gave \$8,325 to build a church building in Chile. A member of the church returned from a mission trip and told the congregation about a place in Chile that needed a building. The missionary in Chile had said a church building could be built for \$8,000. Members of First Baptist Church said they wanted to build that church, and the funds were provided.

In addition to the above mission gift, First Baptist Church has given \$34,521 to the Lottie Moon Christmas offering, exceeding its \$30,000 goal for the period of time.

Gordon H. Sansing, pastor
First Church, Vicksburg



Devotional

Waste management

By Jan Cossitt

Lay not up for yourself treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matthew 9:19-21).

Two large-size words caught my attention as a gigantic garbage truck rumbled along the street. WASTE MANAGEMENT was the message which was communicated to everyone who saw the heavy vehicle.

Waste management has become a multi-billion-dollar industry in our society because of the constant need to dispose of our tangible garbage.

But what about the waste which is so evident in human lives across our country today? We are a generation that has become caught up in the worries of this life, covetousness, and the deceitfulness of riches. Suddenly we don't have time for the things of God. We divide life into the "spiritual" and the "material," but Jesus made no such division.

In the above verses Jesus warns us about living for earthly treasures in this life. Laying up only earthly treasures — or loving material things — will enslave one's heart and

Cossitt

will lead to waste.

Putting earthly gain above heavenly investments can result in a tragic loss — the waste of a human life.

Earthly treasures should be used for God. But if they're gathered for our own use, we'll lose them and our heart also. We must use all of our resources for the glory of God.

As I reflect upon these thoughts, I am committed to becoming a better manager of the waste in my own life. I will seek to be a person of action, one who is willing to take the initiative, not only in sharing the message of Jesus with non-Christians, but also by helping fellow Christians in meaningful and practical ways.

Even as I consider the waste in my own life, I joyfully remember how precious I am to God. As he spoke to the prophet Jeremiah, he speaks to us today as his children. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born, I set you apart."

My prayer is that you might also want to take stock of any waste in your own life and begin now in this new year to manage such material.

"We can only see a little of the ocean,
Just a few miles distance from the rocky shore,
But out there far beyond our eyes' horizon,
There's more immeasurably more."

"We can only see a little of God's loving —
A few rich treasures from his mighty store;
But out there far beyond our eyes' horizon,
There's more immeasurably more."



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



A clean page

"If you want to improve your penmanship, you must practice and practice," my fifth grade teacher said. My hands were cold, because my desk was in the center of the room, and the aluminum-jacketed wood-burning heater was in a far-away corner. My penmanship was not any more flowing then than it is now.

This was the last page in my Blue Horse tablet, so I kept erasing words with the pointed pink eraser on my cedar pencil, and kept rewriting until I'd filled the page. Idly then, I chewed the eraser as I stared out the windows toward the bare branches of the woods beside Ridge Grove School.

Then I decided to change a crooked word on one line. The next erasure left a black smudge; the more I scrubbed, the bigger and blacker it got. Finally I stopped, and gave the page to Miss Owen.

"That's not very neat," she said. "Try again. Remember, practice makes perfect!"

"But I don't have any more paper . . ."

"Here," she said, "I'll give you a clean sheet."

"Father, may I have another year?"
I asked. "I've smudged this one."

Like a big cloud seems to swallow a plane, time swallows the administrations of one president after another, and it swallows my years, one after another.

It's 11:59 EST, and the ball on Times Square begins to descend: 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1. Bells ring. Balloons ascend. Crowds in the streets weave about shouting, "Happy New Year!" For the first time I can remember, Mama has come home with us after Christmas and sits with W.D. and me watching television, as 1989 arrives. Outside our windows, at 12 CST, the firecrackers begin to pop.

The old year is gone, with its mistakes, its broken resolutions, and its forgotten projects. My Father has placed before me a new page.

It's time now to do the things I said I'd do "after Christmas" — redecorate my bedroom, interview the couple in Hattiesburg, invite those friends to dinner . . . My resolutions are written. I cannot wholly determine whether or not I'll keep them. But certainly no one is going to keep them for me.

The next 12 months will be another year of my life. I'd better review those resolutions and goals I've set for 1989. Do I need to rewrite them?

Perhaps I need to recheck them by some questions Terry Helwig listed in her book, *When God Whispers*: "Would anyone be hurt by this? Do I have to step on anyone to reach this goal? Am I going against the grain of the universe to achieve it? Am I serving only God and no one else?"

My Father, in his creation of humans for a purpose of his own, planned for all of us to be different. I can't sew a straight seam like Mama; or mold the lives of teens like my sister, who was recently chosen Teacher of the Year for the third time; or saw a freehand heart out of a piece of new pine lumber, like W.D. can, but I can do the things that I do best, and I can say the words that only I can say.

The new page lies before me, clean and ready for use. And I begin to write . . .

Oh, God and King,
on this 'page'
make a masterpiece
for Yourself,
for Your glory,
in the image
of Your Son.

—Janet Turner

Liberty Church celebrates its 150th anniversary

Recently Liberty Church, Liberty, celebrated its 150th anniversary with over 300 in attendance. The state Historical Commission, represented by Charles Holifield, presented a certificate to the church.

A number of churches, among them East Fork and Zion Hill, sent representatives on April 14, 1838, to constitute this church. Elders present at the meeting in the Old Liberty Male Academy near Tanyard Creek, included Charles Felder, Jesse Young, Zachariah Reeves, Thomas M. Bond, and A. W. Poole.

The first deacon ordained by the church was John B. Turnipseed, and the first pastor was Charles Felder, until his passing in 1843.

In 1840 a building 50 feet long and 20 feet wide was constructed. Total cost for the church, including furnishings was \$1,400. The present property is worth over \$1,000,000.

A vote in 1841 allowed the Presbyterian and Methodists use of the church, the only one in Liberty at the time.

Some slaves joined Liberty Church in 1839 by letter from the Providence Church, which was destroyed in 1930. They later requested to withdraw and organize a church for themselves.

The first protracted meeting of 1841 resulted in 62 additions. In the 1850's, the membership was 160 and today exceeds 600.

In 1838 the church joined the Mississippi Baptist Association, and in 1858 it hosted the state convention. Sunday School work began in 1870 and WMU was organized in 1884.

Renovation of the sanctuary and additional education space took place in 1970.

Music in the church was led by volunteers until 1957 when a paid music director was hired.

Kenneth Gordon, who composed the history highlights for the recent celebration, said: "This church stands today as a citadel of Christianity in our community. The spirit, strength and resolve in our people is no less strong today than 150 years ago in 1838 . . ."

A former pastor, Charles Holifield and his wife, retired in the community. Also, the interim pastor James Sadler, and his family affiliated themselves with the church. Michael W. Glenn is pastor.



Hearing a missionary bring a message to his rural church played a key role in this young man's life in the new film on

stewardship, *The Darkness Shall Turn*.

"The Darkness Shall Turn"

The Darkness Shall Turn is a 30-minute film designed to capture the hope and excitement of the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist method of channeling funds to mission causes.

A two-year project with input and support from the Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, and Stewardship Commission, the film is being premiered in churches across the convention.

It is available from the Broadcast Services Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in video cassette form. Write Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, or phone 968-3800 to reserve a copy for viewing. Each association has received a copy.

The film looks at a few of the places and people who have been changed by efforts funded through the Cooperative Program:

— A youngster who came from a

farm setting and who learned some valuable lessons about giving after hearing a missionary speak.

— The formation of an inner city church, where churches are looked to keep street people from coming inside to sleep and where "Jesus is a word you said when you've smashed your finger."

— Missionaries who call the Cooperative Program the "lifeline of Southern Baptist mission support."



Eight students with Mississippi ties received doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary during commencement exercises Dec. 17. Left to right are W. Mack Amis Jr. of Pascagoula, doctor of ministry; Richard Allen Bradley of Brookhaven, doctor of ministry; David Owen Briscoe of Scobey, doctor of theology; Clyde Robert Dungan of Lucedale, doctor of ministry; Landrum P. Leavell II, seminary president; Thad

A. Moore of Grenada, doctor of ministry; James O. Newell of Pascagoula, doctor of theology; and James Allen Walters of Laurel, doctor of ministry. Also Myles P. Dowdy of Georgia, not pictured, son of Chaplain and Mrs. E. R. Dowdy of Gulfport, and Randall Clayton Millwood from Georgia, pictured below, minister of education at Broadmoor, Jackson, both received doctor of education degrees.

New Orleans Seminary grants degrees

Donald John Bordelon from Plaquemine, La., received the associate of divinity degree in church music ministry on Dec. 17 at New Orleans Seminary, New Orleans, La. He is minister of music and youth at Collins Church. Other Mississippians who were graduated from New Orleans Seminary on Dec. 17 are listed in the following paragraphs.

They include James Allison Burnett, Brandon, master of divinity; Anita Carpenter, Ackerman, master of divinity; Ernie Dean Chaffin, Gulfport, minister of music and youth at First Church, Lumberton, master of church music; Gene B. Douglas, New Hebron, pastor of Palestine Church, Harrisville, associate of divinity degree in pastoral ministries; Charles Allen Fowler, Corinth, minister of music at First Church, Kenner, La., master of church music; Virginia Meli Gardner, Boston, Mass., (married to Arlen Vaughan Gardner

of Union, Miss.), master of religious education, with emphasis in social work; David Gunn, Biloxi, minister of youth and activities at Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian, master of divinity degree, with religious education emphasis; William Russell Lewman, Summit, pastor of Bluff Springs Church, Magnolia, master of divinity;

Frank Marquis, Jr., Jackson, associate pastor/church business administrator, Victory Church, New Orleans, master of religious education; Edward Masterson, Mobile, (who claims as his home church Woodhaven Church, Ocean Springs), master of divinity; George Ferrell Morris, Sylacauga, Ala., pastor of Shubuta Church, Shubuta, master of divinity;

Paul E. Bennett, Pascagoula, master of divinity; Simeon Aaron Nix, Pearl, minister of music at Williams Boulevard Church, Kenner, La., master of church music; Sarah Owen Pittman, Columbus, master of religious education, with specialization in youth; William Brian Rowe, Braxton, master of divinity; Kevin Leigh Wallace, Pontotoc, master of divinity; Harold B. Watkins, Hat-

tiesburg, master of divinity; Billy Holyfield, Pascagoula, associate pastor at First Church, Columbia, associate of divinity in pastoral ministry; David Owen Briscoe, Scobey, pastor of New Palestine Church, Picayune, doctor of theology; Michael Routon, Marmaduke, Ark., pastor of Franklin Church, Flora, associate of divinity degree in pastoral ministry; Thad A. Moore, Grenada, pastor of First Church, Hammond, La., doctor of ministry; Randall Clayton Millwood, Smyrna, Ga., minister of education at Broadmoor Church, Jackson, doctor of education; James O. Newell, Pascagoula, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church, Pine Grove, La., doctor of theology; W. Mack Amis Jr., Pascagoula, pastor of Central Church, Brookhaven, doctor of ministry;

Myles P. Dowdy, Lawrenceville, Ga., pastor of Heritage Mission, Suwanee, Ga. (son of Chaplain and Mrs. E. R. Dowdy of Gulfport), doctor of education; Clyde Robert "Bobby" Dungan, Lucedale, pastor of First Church, Albany, La., doctor of ministry; James Allen Walters, Laurel, pastor of Eastlawn Church, Pascagoula, doctor of ministry.

Mississippians graduate from Southern Seminary

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Six Mississippi students were awarded degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary during the school's 162nd commencement, December 16.

The Mississippi Baptists were among approximately 215 persons to receive degrees.

Herschel Hobbs, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, Okla., delivered the commencement address.

The Mississippi graduates included the following:

Doctor of ministry — Ronald H. Mitchell, serving at Graceland Church, Memphis, Tenn., from Columbus; and Randall Hoyt Rich, serving at Trinity Church, Vicksburg.

Master of church music — Roxanna Lynn Nanney, from Tupelo.

Master of divinity — James Anderson Graves, serving in Hamburg Baptist Church, Hamburg, and Lorenzo Leon Bolden of Natchez.

Doctor of philosophy — Mark Wesson Gregory of Carthage.



Mitchell



Rich

Mid-America grads. have state ties

Of the 30 Dec. 16, 1988, graduates of Mid-America Seminary in Memphis, Tenn., the following are from Mississippi:

Randy Bain, master of divinity, pastor of First Church, Oxford; Barry Baker, master of divinity, son of Mr. and Mrs. Windon Baker of West Helena, Ark.; Ed Baxter, doctorate of theology, pastor of Salem Church, Henning, Tenn.; Bruce Cannon, master of divinity, member of Colonial Hills Church, Southaven, (Mr. Cannon has been employed by the Home Mission Board, SBC, to serve in Missoula, Mont.); Anthony Copeland, master of divinity, son of Mr. and Mrs. Don Copeland of Gadsden, Ala.; John L. James, master of divinity, native of Ripley, who is youth minister of Calvary Bible Church, Munford, Tenn.

Memorial Hospital to buy imaging systems

Baptist Memorial Health Care Corporation in Memphis has received approval from the Mississippi Department of Health to purchase a mobile magnetic resonant imaging system to serve five hospitals and costing \$1.5 million.

The MRI utilizes computerized images and operates similarly to a CAT scan.

The five hospitals are Greenwood-Leflore, Greenwood; Oxford-Lafayette Medical Center, Oxford; Union County General Hospital, New Albany; Baptist Memorial Hospital-Desoto, Southaven; and Magnolia Hospital, Corinth.



Lees receive 25-year pin

Bob Sanderson, right, presents a gift of a check to George and Margaret Lee for their 25 years of service to Lawrence, Marion, and Waltham Counties as director of missions for the three counties' missions programs. Sanderson, pastor of Bunker Hill Church, Marion County, is a member of the tri-county executive committee. Mrs. Lee has been secretary to her husband for the whole 25 years. Prior to coming to the three associations, Lee was pastor of Fayette Church in Jefferson County. The reception honoring the Lees was held at Monticello Church.

JCJC BSU sends group to N.O.

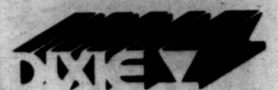
The Baptist Student Union of Jones County Community College sent 12 of its group to New Orleans, Dec. 18-22 for a mission endeavor to work with Central Baptist, an inner-city church which sponsors four mission churches in its facilities — Laotian, Cambodian, Spanish, and black.

The students participated in visitation, Bible studies, drama, conducted a worship service, had a puppet program for some 60 children, and presented a program at a local YWCA for elderly residents. Other work consisted of cleaning and painting doors and windows, as well as putting a wooden floor in two large bathrooms at the church.

The students who participated were Kalinda Byrd, Amy Cameron, Kathy Hough, Kevin Jones, Carolyn Merritt, Debbie Moore, Jerry Morris, Jared Porter, John Robertson, and Eugene Smith. Also traveling with the group were Frank Porter, assistant BSU director, and John Sumner, director.

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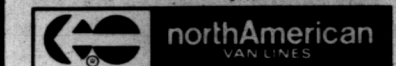


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Just for the Record

Thursday, January 12, 1989

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9



Lauderdale Association recently had its first associational youth choir performance, "Rejoice! In Jesus," a Christmas musical at Fifteenth Avenue Church, Meridian, conducted by Penny McLemore, New Hope Church. Jewel Greer, Russell Church, is the associational youth choir coordinator and Bradley E. Jones, 15th Avenue Church, is the associational church music director.

Clarke College students, staff and faculty again lit the Lottie Moon star for the 13th year on the night of December 14, to celebrate reaching and surpassing the campus goal of raising \$1,750 for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The tradition of raising money for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering on the Clarke campus was started in 1955 by Lowery Compere during his first year as president of the college. In 1958 a sophomore student, Dennis Hale, who later became an SBC foreign missionary, conceived the idea of the Lottie Moon Star with Christmas lights on the star used to represent various amounts of money to be raised for the Lottie Moon Offering. In 1980 the decision was made to separate the Lottie Moon Offering donated on campus from that donated by members of the Clarke College Family through their churches. Clarke College alumni, as they reflect back on their days at Clarke College often recall what a special time it was when the lighting of the Lottie Moon Star occurred.

English teachers sought for China

RICHMOND, Va. — Numerous opportunities exist for Southern Baptists to teach English in China, and some of the teaching openings must be filled on an urgent basis.

Cooperative Services International, the Southern Baptist organization which provides personnel and services to countries where missionaries do not work, has received more requests from colleges and universities in China for English teachers than it can fill with current applicants.

The study of English has become almost a national passion in China as the nation strives to advance economically and increase international ties.

The Chinese schools are seeking teachers of English as a second language for terms ranging from 10 months to two years, beginning next August. They include such institutions as the Shanghai Institute of Mechanical Engineering, Tianjin University, Shenyang Industrial Institute, and Henan Medical University in Zhengzhou.

Cooperative Services International relates directly to some Chinese institutions, and also provides teachers through the Amity Foundation, which was formed by Chinese Christians and other Chinese citizens to serve the needs of their society.

Applicants should be college graduates. Certification in teaching English as a second language also is preferred but not required. Interested Southern Baptists should write CSI '89, P. O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230, or call Glenn Prescott at (804) 353-0151.



"His Way Mine" was the theme of the G.A. Acteen recognition service held at Calvary Church, Newton. This was the first Acteen recognition service for Calvary. Ron Gilstrap is pastor. Pictured, left to right, are Joy Poole; Heather Munn; Tara Hudson, queen; Jamie Boquet, crown bearer; Emily Smith; and Nina Simmons.



Friendship East Church, Charleston, ordained two new deacons recently. Pictured, they are Edward Dean Holland, right, and Raymond Radcliff, left. J. G. Thomas (Buster) center, is the pastor.



"What a Wonderful World" was the theme of the GA recognition service held at Franklin Creek Church, Jackson Association, Sept. 25. Wanda Clark, WMU president and Judy Clark, GA director, presented Mission Adventure badges to the girls who participated in the service. Pictured, from left, are Betsy Clark, Brandi Kendrick, Dorothy Shields, Casey Smith, Melody Clark, Farrah Clark, and Kelli Bell. Girls not pictured are Sabrina Clark, Carrie Price, and Ginger Schafer. GA leaders pictured are Judy Clark and Cynthia Clark.

Resolution honors deacon at Temple

Deacons of Temple Church, Hattiesburg, on Dec. 14 adopted a resolution expressing appreciation for Dorrance Aultman, their chairman of deacons during 1988.

The document states that since the deacons and other Temple members have observed Aultman's integrity, ability, and personal traits, and have come to know his unimpeachable character, they were to share their admiration of him.

In part, the resolution says that "he has shown his love and respect for all people," and that "he has demonstrated his belief in sound physical development through his active lifestyle and his belief in sound

spiritual development by prayer and regular Bible study."

It adds that he shared his resources freely with his church, gave of his time beyond expectations, accentuated a positive influence at all times, and has devoted his life to his family and church and has showed wisdom and courage.

"If highways and roads could speak, they would reflect that he gave more hours of time and travel to his job as chairman of deacons at Temple Church than to time for himself. Neither has he ever compromised the truth, God's word. His understanding of it has been the unbending guide by which he has led us."

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Doesn't God care?

QUESTION:

Everywhere I look, it seems that people are having problems. One family I know has a baby with cystic fibrosis and in another the father is all messed up because of being in Vietnam. I don't understand how a good God can let so many terrible things happen — especially like letting good people die young or old people suffer all alone. Why doesn't God do something about the wars and crime and cruelty and prejudice? Doesn't he care?

ANSWER:

Your question is one which people have wrestled with since the beginning of time. It is hard to reconcile the idea of a good, loving God, with the reality of life as we know it with all its badness and pain. But the answer to both of your questions is "yes." God cares and he has done something about it.

The mistake we make is the thinking that the world as we see it is the way God intended it. But this world is corrupted by sin. People make wrong choices — sometimes on purpose, more often perhaps because of ignorance or carelessness. Innocent people are hurt by those choices, but God is not to blame for the suffering — except to the extent that he created a world in which people are inter-related to each other.

The alternative would be a world of isolated, unfeeling, uncaring robots. It is our capacity to love which leaves us open to pain. If we did not care, we would not suffer. But who wants to live in a world without love?

God's intention is for life to be full of peace and joy. Jesus said, "I have come to give you a more abundant life." That's what God has done about the problem of evil: he has sent Christ to bring us back into fellowship with himself and to show us how to live in peace and joy with each other. He does not override the consequences of the choices which we or others make. He does not upset the natural processes of nature in order to protect us from being hurt. But he goes with us as we move through the imperfect, difficulty and eventually to bring good out of even the worst situation.

Names in the news



Temple Church, Myrtle, recently ordained Doug Phillips, pastor of Canaan Church in Benton County and Ron Simpson, minister of music and youth of Temple Church in Union County Association. Ministers assisting in the ordination were James Travis, professor of Bible, Blue Mountain College, and Larry Roberson, pastor of First Church, Hickory Flat. Katherine Marrow and Martha Phillips provided special music. Pictured, (l to r) are Travis, Phillips, Simpson, and Roberson.

Robin Michael Brumfield was ordained to the ministry by Hopewell Church, in Scott County, Nov. 20. On program were Mack Amis Jr. of Central Church, Brookhaven, and Sonny Adkins of Forest Church. Brumfield has been serving as pastor there since the first of October. He graduated from Talbert Theological Seminary in Los Angeles, California with a master of divinity degree. He has been working with Hughes Aircraft in Forest since 1986.

Adams singles plan banquet

The Adams Baptist Association Single Adults are sponsoring a single adult banquet, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. the banquet will take place at First Church, Natchez, with Dennis Lavarria of Louisiana as featured speaker.

Tickets cost \$7.50 and may be purchased at First Church, Parkway, Calvary, and Washington churches of Natchez.

Larry Black, minister of music at First Church, Jackson, will be conference choir director for the Church Music Leadership Conference at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center in North Carolina, June 17-23.



Ronnie Gamble (center) recently received his pin for 22 years perfect attendance at New Prospect Church (Tishomingo). He is Sunday School director, church treasurer and a deacon. Pictured with him is supply pastor G. D. Jones (right) and chairman of deacons Richard Orter (left).

Raymond Kolb, missionary to Brazil, will be the guest speaker Jan. 15, 11 a.m., at Terry Road Church, Jackson. The church has exceeded its goal of \$1,000 for the Lottie Moon Christmas offering. Henry Bennett is pastor.

Herringtons will transfer to El Paso

Russell and Annette Herrington, missionaries to Costa Rica from Mississippi, will transfer in August of this year to El Paso, Tex., to serve at the Spanish Baptist Publishing House.

He will be the new head of the Music and Worship Department, succeeding Ed Nelson, who is retiring. She will serve as a music editor in the Music and Worship Department.

The Herringtons who have served for 15 years in Costa Rica, will still be foreign missionaries under appointment of the Foreign Mission Board, SBC. They will also work with churches and Baptist leaders in Mexico, in the Juarez area. Their main assignment will be of producing and channeling music and worship materials to around 40 countries with Spanish-speaking populations.

At present, the Herringtons are teaching in the Costa Rica Baptist Seminary. Their address until June 15 is Apartado 1883-1000, San Jose, Costa Rica.

Staff changes

David Kendrick has been called as pastor of Summerland Church in Jones Association. He is a student at New Orleans Seminary. His previous pastorate was in Oklahoma City.

Robert Faulk began serving as pastor of Chester Church, Choctaw County, on Jan. 1.

Faulk has a master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary. He has been serving in West St. Charles Church, New Orleans, as associate pastor, minister of education and evangelism. He is from Webster County where he served as pastor of Montevista Church.

Jim McIntosh is the new pastor of Arlington Church, Lincoln County.

Shady Grove Church, Lincoln County, has called Jim Burnett as pastor.

Emmanuel Church, Biloxi, has called James W. Mills as pastor. He has served churches in Michigan, Colorado, Texas, Missouri, and Arkansas. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., and Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex. He is a certified teacher for the Seminary Extension Department of the Southern Baptist Convention and has taught college level extension courses in Missouri and Arkansas. Also he has completed required study at The Institute of Children's Literature and is commissioned by Contact Teleministries USA, Inc. for crisis intervention ministry.

Joe Lusby is the new pastor of New Prospect Church, Northwest Association. He moved there from the pastorate of Braxton Church.

Friendship Church, Lowndes County, has called Al Griffin as pastor. He has already moved to the church field.

Revival dates

Salem Heights, Highway 84 West, Laurel: Jan. 15-18; Evangelist Bailey Smith, preaching; morning services, 10:30 a.m.; evening services, 7 p.m.; closed circuit screen will be provided in fellowship hall for overflow crowds; nursery; D. J. Benson, pastor

Missionaries up, gifts down

ATLANTA (BP) — As of December, Southern Baptists had deployed their largest number of home missionaries ever but failed to meet the goal for their annual home missions offering.

Southern Baptist Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis told the agency's executive committee 3,841 missionaries now serve across the United States and its territories. That is the largest number of missionaries under appointment by the board at any time, he said.

However, Lewis also told the board that gifts to the 1988 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions will fall nearly \$7 million short of the goal. Receipts as of Dec. 6 were \$30.6 million, only 82 percent of the \$37.5 million goal.

Annie Armstrong gifts are up 2 percent from the same time last year.

Lewis also expressed concern about what he called a "continued assault" on the Cooperative Program and an escalating trend toward negative designation of funds away from some agencies.

"Negative designation is becoming a popular concept for channeling money away from parts of our cooperative ministries some may not agree with," he noted. "This smacks of the immaturity of a child who says, 'If I can't have my way, I'll take my bat and ball and go home.'"

At the December meeting, directors appointed 26 missionaries and approved support for 17 mission pastors.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMENTARIES

Christ has the power to forgive sins today.

By Gary Berry
Luke 5:17-26

Since Christ has the power to forgive sins today, we must be persistent in our efforts to reach out to individuals who are lost.



Berry

The teaching of Jesus continued to draw the crowds. The composition of the crowd mentioned here (verse 17) is mixed. Present in that crowd were many who were hungry for the words of Jesus, but not everyone was present for that purpose. Two groups with less than pure motives had come to hear Jesus. Those two groups were the Pharisees and the scribes. The Pharisees were the separatists of their day, separating themselves from impurity, the heathen, and sinners. The "doctors of the law" (verse 17) were the scribes who studied, taught, and protected the Mosaic law.

UNIFORM

The Pharisees provided a stark contrast to the liberalism of the Sadducees. Believing all the Bible (the Old Testament) was holy scripture, the Pharisees had little in common with the theology of the Sadducees who viewed only the first four books of the Old Testament as scripture.

The Sadducees obviously did not believe enough about scripture or about God. On the other hand, the Pharisees devised so many man-made rules to protect the scripture, they came to believe too much; failing to distinguish between what God said and what men said about what God had said. Each group, the Pharisees, the scribes of the Pharisees, and the Sadducees lost sight of God and lost heart for the spiritual needs of men by substituting their own agendas. By their very existence from this day on, they would oppose Jesus.

The text shows another contrast. We see the

closed minds of religious leader whose preconceived ideas blinded them to the working of God. They could not discern what was actually happening. They did not know God, therefore they did not know what God was doing: "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he receive them, for they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2:14).

In contrast to the locked minds and frozen hearts of the religious leaders, four men brought a friend who was paralyzed for Jesus to heal. They exercised persistent faith by bringing their friend before Jesus, despite the obstacles. We must not exclude the sick man from the ranks of those exercising faith. In response to his faith and the faith of his friends who brought him, Jesus forgave the man's sins and healed him.

The scribes and Pharisees were enraged when Jesus forgave the man's sins. They accused him of blasphemy because only God could

forgive sins. Their theology was correct, but their understanding was nonexistent. Jesus was, in fact, speaking out of his own authority as the Son of God to forgive the sins of the man. Then, he healed the man to show that he has authority both to forgive and to heal. He demonstrated his deity in unmistakable terms.

What is the proper response to such forgiveness and wholeness? The man went back home giving glory to God for what Jesus had done in his life (verse 25). And the crowd, with the exception of the Pharisees and the scribes, also glorified God. Is that not the proper response for men whose sins have been forgiven and to whom life has been given?

Jesus has authority to forgive sins. What a powerful truth! When we come to the end of our efforts to justify our sins and repent of them, Jesus will forgive our sins, too. Not all people know that. We have the privilege and the sacred responsibility of bringing men before Jesus that he might make them whole. What can you do today to bring someone before the Christ?

Berry is pastor, First, McComb.

Where is the church nursery? is it down the hall?

By J. Greg Martin

I Corinthians 2:2-5, 12-16; 3:1-3

The nursery of your church may not be where you presume it to be. Many think it is the room down the hall that is lined with baby beds and



Martin

often perpetrates strange noises. The Bible teaches that the nursery is often kept in the worship center. It is there that many of God's spiritual infants gather to make a racket.

In I Corinthians 2:1-4:5, Paul discussed some of the problems relating to carnal Christians. He identified the Spirit of God as what will enable the people of God to grow out of jealousy and strife and into Christian maturity.

LIFE AND WORK

In I Corinthians 2:2-5 Paul acknowledged that his preaching of Christ was not of his own ability, but the Holy Spirit's working. Paul confessed that he was weak and fearful, and his body trembled outside the Spirit's help. However, when he relied on the Holy Spirit he could have the boldness of a lion to proclaim the gospel.

This is also true for God's timid people today. The Holy Spirit can give us the boldness to declare the way of salvation. He can grant us the courage to declare that sins, such as abortion, are wicked in the eyes of God. We do not need to debate the effectiveness of the cross with religious rhetoric. We need simply to de-

pend on the Spirit to help us proclaim the foolishness of man's wisdom and the superiority of God's.

The Holy Spirit can also help us grow in our understanding of God's saving grace, vs 12-13. To a lost person there is no appreciation (1:18) or understanding (2:14-16) of God's work in the cross. Only the Holy Spirit can illuminate a person's heart to understand God's mysterious work. Nicodemus could not understand Jesus (John 3) because his life was void of God's Spirit. So it is with lost men today.

As Paul was dependent on the Holy Spirit for spiritual insights, so must we be. Not to rely on the Spirit is to stay carnal or fleshly. It means to remain a spiritual baby. When God's people willfully remain carnal by neglecting the milk of God's word, strife, envying, and divisions are inevitable in the church. This lack of spiritual growth hinders God's work. It gets our minds

off Bold Mission Thrust and replaces it with selfish desires.

The key to spiritual growth and Christian maturity is walking in the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 commands us to "be filled with the Spirit." This means to let him control us. With the cold winds of winter upon us, I have recently rediscovered my gloves. If I said to my left glove that was lying on the kitchen table, "Please open the door," it would just lie there. However, if I put my hand in the glove, it would do whatever I desired. It would be under my control. So it is with the Spirit of God. He wants us to rely on him so he can control our thoughts, actions, and attitudes. When he is in control, we will be free from spiritual immaturity and on the road to a life that is filled with boldness, understanding, and commitment.

Martin is pastor, Commission Road Church, Long Beach.

Ministry and witness in the temple: Lame man walks

By Bert Breland

Acts 3:1-26

Acts chapter 3 begins as abruptly as chapter 2 ended. There is no indication of how much time has passed between these chapters,



Breland

whether it was hours, days, weeks, or months. All we know is that Peter and John were on their way to the temple to take part in one of the daily Jewish prayer periods. There are two things of special interest emerging in this chapter, the first being that Peter, John, and James (who isn't mentioned here) are becoming the leaders of the disciples, and second, the disciples at this point are still very much involved in the life and worship of Judaism.

On this particular day, as Peter and John enter the temple at the gate called Beautiful, they are confronted with a man begging alms. Luke's reference to the Beautiful gate is somewhat obscure since the Jewish tradition makes no mention of a gate called Beautiful. Many scholars think that it was most likely an

BIBLE BOOK

eastern gate which was fashioned from Corinthian bronze, and which on one occasion the Jewish historian, Josephus, had described as quite beautiful.

As they enter the temple they hear the request of the beggar; Simon Peter asks the man to look at him. Why was this necessary? Possibly it was because this man would hang his head in shame as he extended his hand to beg. Simon Peter wanted this man to look at him because he did not want this to be an impersonal or hurried exchange such as coins dropping in a tin cup. He really wanted to touch this man's life.

Upon request, the man lifted his gaze toward Simon Peter, and then he received what I'm sure he thought at the time was bad news, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto thee." The man's head probably dropped again in disappointment because silver and gold were exactly what he wanted. He couldn't have known what was about to happen or how his life was about to change. Simon Peter spoke to him, saying, "In the name of

Jesus Christ the Nazarene, walk!"

We don't really know how the man reacted at this point. He may have laughed, got mad, or moaned in despair, feeling ridiculed. We do know that he made no attempt to walk. He most likely began to look down the lane for his next prospect. However, undaunted by the lack of response, Simon Peter pulled the man to his feet. For the first time in his life, the man felt strength in his feet and legs, and he stood and walked on his own. More than that, he began to leap for joy and praise God.

The importance of this story is not just that a lame man was made whole, but that it was done by Jesus Christ. Simon Peter seized the moment and the opportunity to give a strong witness for Jesus as the Christ. He immediately pointed out that the power was not his but belonged to God. He reminded his listeners that the God that had healed the man is the same God that had sent Jesus into the world. In case they had forgotten, Peter recalled for them the horrible way that they had treated God's "holy and righteous one." It is important to note that while Simon Peter wanted them to realize their guilt, his purpose was not to condemn them but to win them.

We notice a distinct change in Simon Peter's tone in verse 17. He calls them "brethren" and acknowledges that they were following their leaders and that they acted in ignorance. Simon Peter of all people should be sympathetic with those who had rejected Christ. We see this more compassionate side of Simon as he appeals for them to repent and return. If they do, they are promised that their sins will be forgiven and they shall experience the refreshing presence of the Lord. Simon quickly points out that the presence is experienced through Jesus Christ.

As we reflect on this passage for practical applications for our lives, there are several things we should remember. First, the disciples were men of prayer. Strength for ministry and witnessing is found in prayer. Second, as these men were on their way to pray, they had time to stop and touch someone who was in need. Third, ministering to someone's physical needs oftentimes opens the door to minister to their spiritual needs. Finally, when those "reachable moments" occur, we must seize the opportunity. Ministering and witnessing are to be a part of every disciple's daily walk.

Breland is pastor, North Greenwood Church, Greenwood.

Churches adopt Expanded Annuity Plan

The following churches have adopted the Expanded Annuity Plan since those reported in the Dec. 22 issue of the Baptist Record: Chickasaw: FBC Okalona; Clay: Cedar Bluff; Gulf Coast: Bel Aire; Itawamba: Dorsey; Jones: Freedom; Lawrence: Old Silver Creek; Prentiss: Candler's Chapel and Forrest Hill; Rankin: Cato; Tippah: FBC Ripley; and Wayne: FBC Bucatuna.

Mississippi Baptist activities

Jan. 15 Sanctity of Human Life Sunday (CAC Emphasis)

Off the Record

The long-winded lecturer had been holding forth for over an hour, except for brief pauses now and then to gulp a hasty drink of water. Finally, during one such intermission, an old man in the audience whispered to his neighbor, "First time I ever saw a windmill run by water!"

More pay for Sunday?

OSLO, Norway (EP) — More pay for work done on Sunday is a request of a Lutheran clergy group, which pointed out to the government that those in other professions do not have to work on that day. During a Church of Norway's Pastors' Association meeting in September, the group asked the government's Ministry of Church and Education for extra pay for work done on Sundays, pointing out that in comparison to other professions, pastors are underpaid. The Church of Norway is the country's state church, with a nominal membership of approximately 3.9 million members. Pastors are paid out of public funds. The request came after the Association decided against a strike in labor disputes.

IRS revokes tax exemption of church for first time

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — The Internal Revenue Service has for the first time revoked the tax-exempt status of a local church.

Following two examinations, the IRS concluded Second Baptist Church of Goldsboro, N.C., did not qualify under the Internal Revenue Code as a charitable organization for the years 1983-1985, because it operated a racially segregated school during that period.

The church, an independent Baptist congregation, has challenged the IRS action in U.S. Tax Court, arguing that following a 1983 Supreme Court decision it operated the school in a racially non-discriminatory manner, but

even had it not the public benefit it provided to society should entitle it to tax exemption. The court has not yet set a date to hear the congregation's challenge.

From the school's inception in 1963, the school corporation adopted an admissions policy that barred black students. The policy stated a "religious belief that God set up racial barriers and that the mixing of races is contrary to the teaching of the Bible."

Because of the admissions policy, the IRS denied the school corporation tax-exempt status during 1969-1972. The corporation's legal challenge to the IRS ruling became part of a

publicized 1983 Supreme Court decision.

In that decision — which also involved the revocation of Bob Jones University's tax-exempt status over racially discriminatory policies — the high court upheld the IRS's position, ruling that a private school must maintain a non-discriminatory policy in order to qualify as an exempt organization. The court held that schools with racially discriminatory policies violate a fundamental "public policy" and cannot be viewed as conferring a public benefit within the "charitable" concept of common law standards.

Kathy Palen writes for the BP Washington bureau.



Knapps receive distinguished award

Missionaries Doug and Evelyn Knapp received the Distinguished Service Award of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission from the CLC's executive director, Richard Land (left), during the December meeting of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond. The CLC recognized the Knapps for more than 25 years as "doers of the Word" in Tanzania. Land lauded the Knapps' career, which he said produced "leadership in Christian ethics and a unique blending of applied Christianity and evangelism." Their ministry resulted in agricultural work which combated hunger, encouragement of racial equality and evangelism which produced thousands of baptisms. The veteran missionary couple will retire in 1989 in Gainesville, Fla.



Book reviews

Warren McWilliams. **WHEN YOU WALK THROUGH THE FIRE.** Nashville: Broadman Press, 1986. 165 pages, paperback.

Warren McWilliams, chairman of the religion department at Oklahoma Baptist University, is establishing himself as a Baptist expert on the theology of suffering. His book, *The Passion of God* (Mercer Press, 1985), discusses the concept of God's suffering to identify with our suffering, and shows the acceptance of this doctrine among a variety of recent Protestant theologians.

McWilliams has written again on the subject of suffering. *When You Walk Through the Fire*, a title taken from Isaiah 43:2, is a unique book because it is not just another attempt to explain suffering. Instead, the book takes the Bible itself and surveys the Old and New Testaments to give a balanced view of what God's Word says on the subject.

The book has eight chapters, with the six middle chapters devoted to Bible study. These chapters cover the subject of suffering in the Pentateuch, the prophets, the wisdom writings, the Gospels and Acts, Paul's letters, and the general letters and Revelation.

McWilliams draws several conclusions from his Scriptural study. God is ultimately responsible for suffering because he created a world in which suffering can happen, but all suffering is not directly from God. While sin may cause suffering, at other times people suffer innocently. Suffering can be a learning experience, especially if we gain a better understanding of God. Just as Jesus' suffering was redemptive, human suffering can have a positive impact on others. God both identifies with the sufferer and is involved with the sufferer, for his ultimate will for us is good. McWilliams reminds us that we should not sit back and do nothing about evil, waiting for God to prevent suffering, for it is part of God's plan to use our human efforts to relieve suffering.

McWilliams writes in a popular style, making frequent use of quotations, illustrations, and diagrams. *When You Walk Through the Fire* is a helpful book for anyone wishing to

know what the Bible says about suffering.

—Reviewed by Bob Rogers, pastor, Calvary Church, Gloster.

Holcomb, Tim J. **PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION GUIDE FOR SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCHES;** Nashville: Convention; 1988.

This book is a good reference tool for any pastor or personnel committee who is looking for one book that says it all on staff.

The first three chapters deal with developing a staff plan and establishing and maintaining a salary plan. Four chapters deal with leadership style. Three chapters deal with organizing a staff and the final deal with maintaining good staff records.

A good ready reference for the busy pastor, or staff member and excellent material for a personnel committee. Reviewed by Greg Potts, pastor, Providence Baptist Church, Meadville.

SCRAPBOOK

One more morning

One more morning
I watch the sun awakening and bursting forth:
The artistry of God,
With shades of many colors
Softened by the morning dew.
And as if the visual beauty were not enough,
He serenades me with a joyful song
That the waking birds know so well —
A song of praise and thanksgiving
For the beauty he has wrought.

And as I stand here watching the morning unfold,
I cannot help looking forward

To one more morning
When I shall see a different Son
Burst forth in all his glory,
And behold the artistry of God
And the wonders that lie in store
For the truly grateful,
And hear the serenade of angels' rejoicing.

I look forward to one more morning
And the coming of the Son who outshines them all.

—Richard A. Ryan
Parchman

A new leaf

Everything became a burden,
My duties were a dare;
The cupboard was empty,
My table was bare.

I climbed up a mountain
Looked far and near,
Fell on my knees
And found God there.

When I returned home
Where I had been,
I turned a new leaf
And let Jesus in.

My chores became a blessing,
The cupboard no longer bare;
My heart keeps overflowing
For God is always there.

—Velma A. Windham
Taylorsville

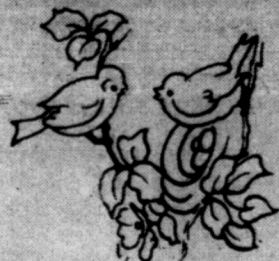
Two sparrows speak

"Come, little sparrow friend,
He gave us crumbs to eat;
Let's soar and chirp and praise
Our Heavenly Friend so sweet.

"Oh, the banquet table
for humans he doth spread;
Don't you hope they'll see and learn,
from the precious hand we're fed?"

"Come unto me, ye weary,"
he hath said,
'Consider the lilies' radiant gown,
and little hungry sparrows fed."

—Lera Jacobs
Pontotoc



Two little sparrows in the way
rejoicing o'er the crumbs they found —
One said to the other,
with a troubled frown...

"We're worth only a few farthings
and see how he cares for us?
Why can't these humans
seek more his love and trust?"

"We know he has many forms:
the beggar on the street,
an angel in a dream
in sparrows at one's feet.

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